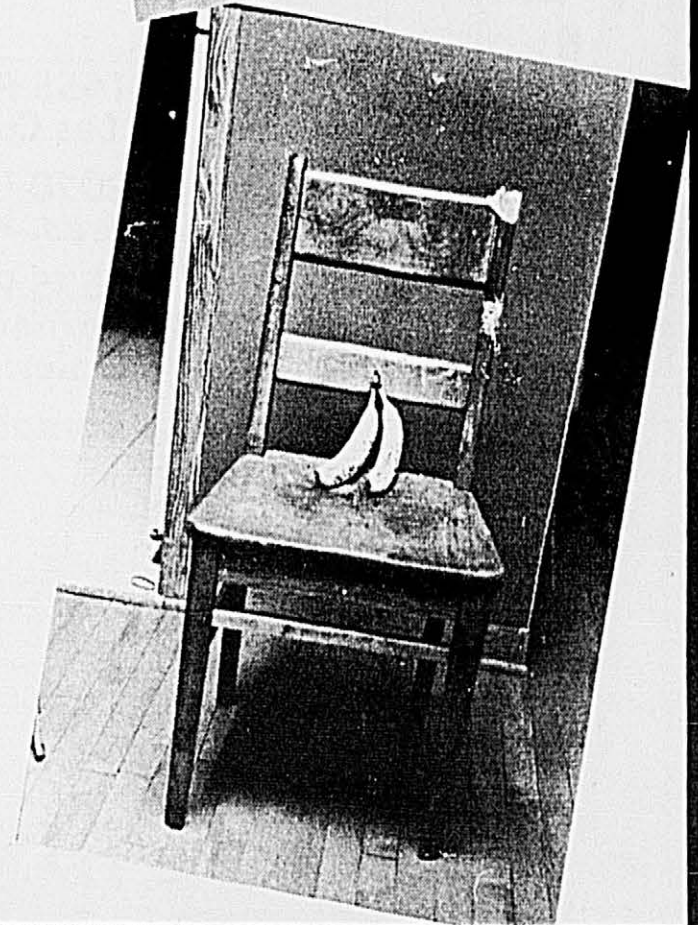
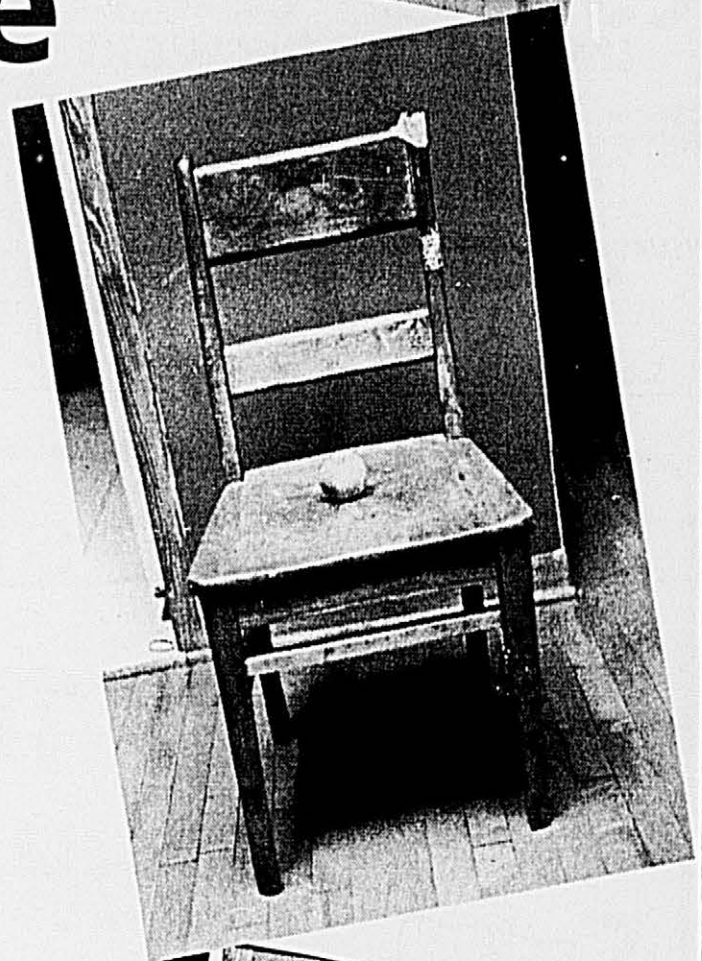
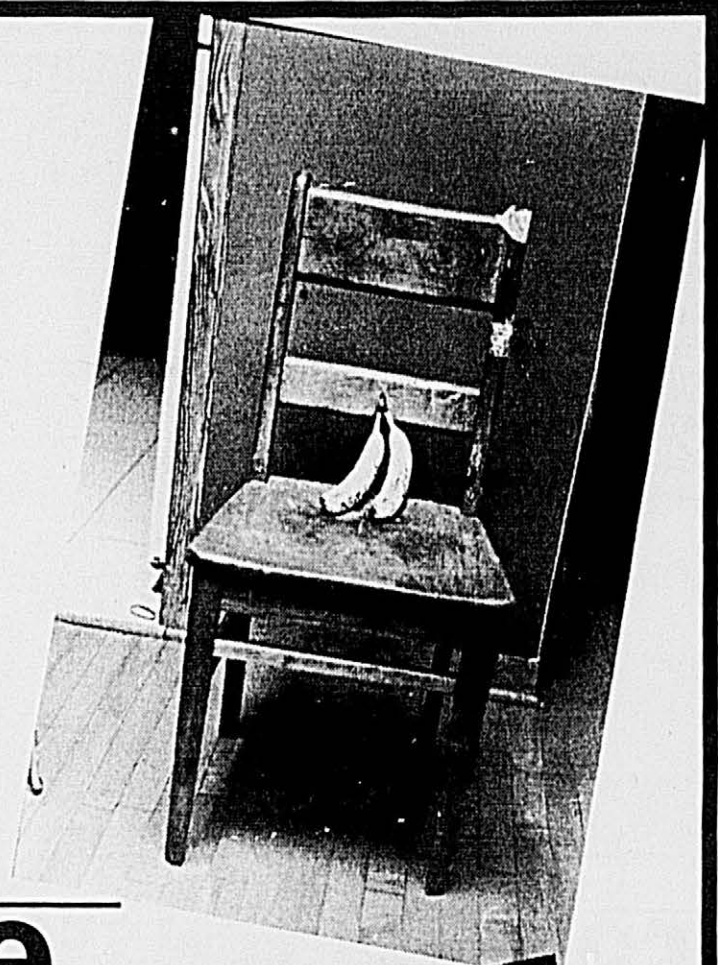


volume 88 issue 67

the mcgill daily culture

april 8, 1999



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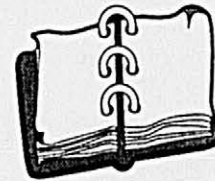
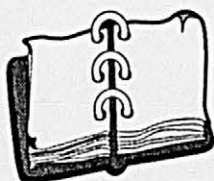
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EDDY BISHARA PHARMACY

Photo Essay: The Grinch Rides Again

by Amy Papaelias



She's a mean, green, rusting machine and she's coming for you. Buckle up, kids, The Grinch is ready to roll.

**The
McGILL
Daily**

volume 88 number 67

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The Daily is a founding member of Canadian University Press and Presse étudiante du Québec.

Printed on 20% Recycled Paper.
ISSN 1192-4608

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Extremely Different

VANILLA ICE CHANGES HIS IMAGE BUT STILL SUCKS

by Alex Halperin

// It's been hell for me," Vanilla Ice boasts of his spectacular success and downfall. "I was a puppet, a record company whore...but now I'm just keepin' it real." He certainly has changed. His new album *Hard to Swallow* is a hybrid of hip-hop and hardcore closer to KoRn than MC Hammer, a far cry from his original sequined suited, parachute panted, royal lcence. It is not, however, any better than his previous work, for which he will live forever in hip-hop infamy. Now with a fresh sponsorship from Adidas, an album of angry songs, and an anti-image image, he's struggling back to fame through the same channels that made a joke of him less than a decade ago.

Ice, Vanilla, Rob Van Winkle, whatever you want to call him, refers to the defining moment of his life as the Faustian bargain he made with Capitol Records for \$1.5 million which cost him his hip-hop credibility, and his artistic spirit. "With the stroke of a pen on a contract I could have made a complete different destiny for myself." At the time he had an offer from New York based Def Jam records for \$30,000. He took the money, "Anyone in my shoes would have took the same path I took." But it screwed him over streetwise. Before he was opening for Ice-T, Public Enemy and other credible rappers. When he signed the contract, "The black crowd deserted me overnight...I was selling to huge arenas now but to like twelve year olds with braces....I was turned into a novelty act."

As a novelty act, he sold fifteen million records to white middle school kids and then endured a tortured public backlash. He converted huge numbers of white kids to hip-hop but it would be difficult to find one who'd admit to it.

One week my whole middle school class was jumping around to "Ice Ice Baby," the next Vanilla Ice was a massive joke, even among prepubescent. Why did Vanilla Ice become the most mocked performer of the decade instead of just fading out and enjoying his money like any other self-respecting anonymous pop star? Surely his offenses were no greater than anyone

else's.

Critics and the public lambasted him for streamlining a black art into a substanceless profit vehicle and stealing songs as he did it. In addition, he was arrogant and did anything for a buck including signing endorsements for Nike and Coke, and starring in "Cool as Ice," a movie even worse than its name. However, none of these trespasses are unique to Vanilla Ice alone. Puff Daddy, the reigning king of commercial rap, is guilty of trivializing rap, flagrant sampling and crass commercialism. His samples are even more obvious than Ice's. The Rolling Stones plugged Microsoft and received endorsement from Tommy Hilfiger. None of these are actions impaired by artistic integrity, but no one snickers when Keith Richards walks by.

Vanilla Ice danced onto the scene at the wrong time, a transition point between the corporate novelty acts of the late eighties and the corporate anti-corporate poseur acts of the early nineties. His magnum opus *To The Extreme* (still the best selling hip-hop album of all time) made it big in 1990. The next year came the three biggest white boy albums of the nineties: Nirvana's *Nevermind*, Pearl Jam's *Ten*, and Metallica's *Metallica*. In transforming America to grunge nation, Vanilla Ice had to be let go. He was glamour, grunge was plaid. He was gel and dancing, grunge was army boots and sulking. He was an act molded by the establishment to sell millions of records, grunge...

But Vanilla was not just forgotten, he was ridiculed mercilessly and then forgotten. He falsified his biography, appeared

in Madonna's "Sex" book, dropped his pants on national TV and generally made an ass out of himself. But even if he

olds pissed off because they still have a curfew. These kids are Vanilla's new target demographic. Barely potty trained

doesn't care about the money. He says image doesn't matter; "just sit back and enjoy the music." Fair enough. But the music is terrible. His lyrics are angry without being new. He said "writing *Hard to Swallow* was therapy...it was very emotional for me." In the lyrics he recounts his miserable downfall into drugs and attempted suicide, both of which he brags about to any interviewer who'll listen.

But *Hard to Swallow*'s lyrics are neither smart nor comprehensible. He shouts his banalities over an unimpressive hardcore band that includes a synthesizer, a relic of his past he just couldn't leave by the wayside. On stage he goes through every hackneyed tormented rock star gesture as if he made it up. As is customary he shouts, "Fuck the industry! Fuck the establishment! Fuck the critics!"

Capitol and Universal records have had quite a good time with Vanilla Ice. With *To The Extreme* they proved anything they can hype they can sell. Then when morays changed he was crucified by the public and abandoned. Now he has been sculpted again. Will Universal continue to impose Ice on the obedient public? Their eyes are on the tour.

As for the sales of the new album, Vanilla doesn't care. He only agreed to the deal with Universal if he could get "complete fuckin' freedom," and now that he has it, and because of the emotional struggle it took him to make *Hard to Swallow*, "The album is already a success whether it sells one copy or fifteen million." Besides money doesn't have the clout it once had for Vanilla, when he was young and struggling to pay off his 5.0. "I've made great investments," he smiles.



LUCRATIVE ENDORSEMENT DEALS OR NO, VANILLA ICE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT THE MONEY.

hadn't, with Kurt Cobain whining and James Hetfield raging, it was inevitable that Vanilla Ice would become the great martyr of eighties pop.

A few years later and novelty acts are big again. The Backstreet Boys attract throngs of screaming girls every time they step outside. Puff Daddy uses the same techniques as Ice to great success and Vanilla Ice has jumped on a different bandwagon. His anguished colleagues KoRn sell millions of records to angsty fourteen-year-

when "Ice Ice Baby" hit it big, he has no past they remember and he's just as pissed off as they are.

Despite his lofty quoting of "Video Killed The Radio Star," his new album has a video single. Laughably titled "Too Cold," it's a hardcore remix of "Ice Ice Baby." He claims to be "anti-image" without realizing that he has just changed his image to trendy rebellious conformity complete with the uniform of tattoos and bleached hair. But, Adidas deal or not he

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Macbeth

COMMENDABLE, BUT LACKS OOMPH

by **Melanie Takefman**

Shakespeare's *Macbeth* has it all: action, glory, love, betrayal, and black magic. So it always befuddles me when modern productions of the play rely solely on its powerful dialogue and character development to carry the plot when it has so much potential for visual spectacle. While I didn't expect leading man Yoni Motskin's head to be rolling down the aisle of Moyse Hall, I did have high hopes: I wanted gruesome witches! violence! lust! guts!

So this was the challenge that I conferred to director W. Steven Lecky, and his McGill Theatre Lab class: to breathe wacky life into a play that has been (un)done many times. I give them an A for effort. The production is inconsistent; the leads struggle to give a unified performance, only occasionally infusing Shakespeare's script with the emotion it deserves. The only redeeming factors are the supporting characters as well as the innovative design.

For those of you who haven't read *Macbeth*, or if you slept through Grade 10 English, here's a summary: *Macbeth*, a noble medieval Scotsman, climbs the power ladder of his country at the insistence of his wife, by killing anyone that gets in his way. The three weird sisters twist the plot by prophesizing the events. Through most of the play, *Macbeth* is haunted by his actions, and the moral is clear: greed is dangerous and power is destructive.

For the first few scenes, Yoni Motskin couldn't seem to master *Macbeth*. He mumbled his lines with an evident lack of emotion and a garbled Scottish accent. Anika Mendell who played Lady *Macbeth*, also had a weak opening. In these scenes, Andrew Linley, the doomed Banquo, took the spotlight as he made up for the dramatic skill that the leads lacked.

The three witches (Emily DeCola, Synthia Tom and Moira Sauer), in a refreshing incarnation, also saved the opening scenes with their sassy performances that complemented each other. While the witches' costumes (designed by Carrie Schoemer) usually take the backseat in *Macbeth*, these weird sisters were dressed to kill as a hunchback and two vamp-like characters. Four spinners,

original to this production (apparently to accommodate the dearth of female roles), also contributed lively dramatic support.

As for elegance, all the glitter was saved for Lady *Macbeth* whose clothes outshone her performance for most of the play. While the chemistry between Motskin and Mendell intensified as *Macbeth* rose to power, she relied too much on him, only living up to her potential in their scenes together.

Sensational scenes were erratic as the characters' performances weren't always coherent with respect to one other. However when they were, for example, when Banquo's ghost attended the *Macbeths'* dinner party, the audience was captivated. Moira Sauer as Lady *MacDuff* and Alexandra Prichard as her son also gave noteworthy performances in their final scene.

The lighting and the set, by Spike Lyne and Susanne Cote and Lecky, respectively, enhanced the actors' performances in scenes like this. The lighting was not overdone, but sophisticated. And the minimal sets were brilliantly exploited.

Lucky for the rest of the cast, Motskin redeemed himself in *Macbeth's* final moments of insanity. He does a superb job of conveying the tragic hero's angst and frustration and leaves the viewer satisfied in the end.

Furthermore, the final confrontation between *MacDuff*, played less-than-effectively by Giuseppe Gallaccio, and *Macbeth* provided me with most of the action that I had yearned for. The fact that it was performed in slow motion seemed bizarre at first, but essentially got the job done.

Overall, this production of *Macbeth* injected some new perspectives into the classic tale, but was a little rough around the edges. As a student production, Lecky and his class could have been more risky and experimental. The *Macbeth* fan will enjoy the slight twists in the plot and superior set, lighting and costume design, but, overall, this interpretation lacks originality.

The McGill English Department's production of *Macbeth* is playing from April 7-10 at 8p.m. in Moyse Hall. Tickets are \$10 or \$6 for students and seniors. Call 398-6070 to reserve.



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FLICKS FROM THE SWAMP

Arithmetic and Poppycock

THE ONTOLOGY OF KEANU REEVES AND A FAREWELL BENEDICTION FROM BEV.

by Beverly Swamp

Everyone thought I was mad. "Lurid Poppycock!" cried the naysayers; "Malignant claptrap" yelped the fishmongers; "Churlish Buffoonery!" squealed the surgeons.

I went to go see *The Matrix* this week, because it's my last article and I've never aimed to please. All year, I've tried to blend creative writing with film criticism in a glib, jokey loaf of weekly text. I now see the foolishness of this project, the likes of which only dregs like Cultural Studies "students" might deign to essay. Is there no hope for a piece of postmodern poon tang in film reviewing?

With arms flailing, I shriek into the fire of the night: "Nyet!"

Now, everyone and their pet kumquat knows that Keanu Reeves is one of the worst actors ever to work in Hollywood. That's not so amazing. What's amazing is that it is still possible to make a good use of him in a picture because of his incompetence.

He didn't sabotage *Dangerous Liaisons* even a little: it was precisely his boringness, his blank numbness that crafted him as a perfect pawn in the chess match between Glenn Close and John Malkovich. In Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, he played himself in the guise of a paltry, naive and indecisive English solicitor, exactly what Jonathan Harker is in Stoker's novel. *Point Break*? Fuck, as far as I'm concerned any movie about surfers who dress up as ex-presidents to rob banks is visionary. In *The Matrix*, Reeves plays Neo, a computer hacker destined to liberate humanity from the bonds of reality which is really just a computer program designed by robots in the future to turn human beings into batteries. His banality again serves a narrative function, as the characters constantly wonder: is this guy the One?

Having abandoned the prospect of literaturizing a review, I

have resorted to the only other language I know. Today I shall become the world's first fully functional mathematical film critic:

The cockpit of the *Millennium Falcon* / The solipsistic total system surveillance world of Phillip K. Dick stories, George Orwell and *Dark City* + The Artificial Intelligence gone horribly wrong premise of *Terminator*, *Westworld* and *2001 x two* or three of the better Asimov Robot novels + the fight-sequence style of Hong Kong action films like *Hard Boiled* x an ocean of shrapnel, superkicks, kung fu and most of the guns made famous in *Predator* and *Commando* x six pureed Gap commercials + the squid attacking vessel trope of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* - one good scene that precisely articulates the premise + (The cold, blue urban environments of *Robocop* the messy, jagged circuitous world of *Bladerunner* and *Freejack* + a sexy Carrie-Anne Moss in a leather *Batman* Catwoman number) + the world-come-computer-program of *Tron* + the leather outfits Kiss wore in their *Revenge* tour + six pints of suspended disbelief x a wide-faced Laurence Fishburn in superclose-up + the starship-scapes of the first *Alien* the Borg episodes of *Star Trek, TNG* = one, fully functional, *Matrix*.

Sound ludicrous? How about an entire generation of young intellectuals who constantly shy away from their own affinities to protect a ruse of cognitive superiority. A whole population of academes sweltering in the Alley talking about Peter Greenaway, Fritz Lang and Stanley Kubrick, as if their names were bastions of truth in an ocean of galling crap. Nattering, pretending fools who claim it is somehow monumentally wrong for a movie to simply entertain. These voices are the same that treat Catholic religiosity as if it were a silly, profane, backward yarn, ignoring the powerful and deep feelings it evokes in hun-

dreds of millions of human souls. The same voices that slink unconsciously into the caustic and cruel fictional diatribes of reductive politics, token sexual identities, utterly crappy opinions and the very dangerously Eurocentric perspectives they so vociferously deplore.

Look, kid: odds are you're an upper middle class urban- or suburban-bred white person. In cultural terms, you're dirt under a fingernail on the left hand of God. You think you're erudite, high-minded, discerning; as special as a piece of undigested corn in a toilet bowl. Look deep in the mirror, champ - check out how low your brow really is. You have all the taste of a boiled garbanzo. If you think you're too good for an action flick with a banal and stupid lead actor, you're fooling yourself. You're lousy, egotistical, boring and so utterly bereft of a single discernible distinguishing feature that you make me nauseous just postulating the belief that you and I have a relationship through a medium. In short, fair reader, you are Keanu Reeves.

Considering my omniscience, you can take these observations to the bank.

And so we say farewell. I am sure that you will still be here next year, next millennium, forever. Me?

I've decided to surgically alter my appearance into a likeness of Catherine the Great and move to England to seduce, marry and murder Shakespearean Sir John Gielgud, then move to the Berkshires with my Beloved V. and start a Llama farm off Sir John's substantial estate.

Should you pass by my ostentatious ranch and chance upon me eating lunch off the Olympic-calibre ass of my beloved V., walk on by you pawn, walk on by.

Mad indeed.

The Matrix is playing at Loews.



SCENE

LOCALLY

by Tyler Hargreaves



GATEKEEPER CHARLIE

Name: Charlie

Occupation: Gatekeeper, Royal Victoria College

Topic: Food

What's your favourite home-cooked meal?

and it will be well known for one kind of food or another. From Szechwan to Italian to anything else.

My favourite home-cooked meal would be tourtière.

Cooked for you by who?

What's is your favourite ethnic food?

By my mother, by the wife. Mostly by the wife.

Chinese is my favourite.

What's your favourite meal to prepare?

Do you have a favourite Chinese Restaurant?

It would be chinese chicken fried rice.

No. They are all good to me.

What's the most memorable meal you ever had?

Why is food so important in a cultural sense to people?

It would be a steak dinner in the Old Montréal about ten years ago. It was at the Auberge de St-Gabriel. I remember it cause I was in good company then.

Well because people relate who they are to that. It is a tradition. If you are Italian you go to good pasta at Da Giovanni. If people know who you are and where you come from they bring you to good restaurants. To a Greek guy or a Greek woman they can take them to this Greek restaurant that they like. I think that it's a part of cultural diversity and preserving your tradition.

Why are there so many restaurants in Montréal?

Because people love food. They travel here from Vermont or any state or province and they know that Montréal has good restaurants and places to go. And cause of all the different people here. They can go up Parc Street for some Greek food. They can go down to any section of town

Is the way to a man's heart through his stomach?

(Laughing) I think it is, yeah. Because once your stomach is full you can start worrying about having other things to do.

UNITING madre-tierra

by Dave Brophy and Katie Nolan
photos from the website: <http://home.ican.net/~dougan/panama>

Along with a wide range of exciting new courses in environmental studies, the School of the Environment, McGill's most recently established department, offered a semester-long fieldcourse in Panama to students of all disciplines. The first, fortunate group who participated in this unique learning experience was made up of 25 third and fourth-year students majoring in a variety of areas from biology, and geography, to anthropology. The curriculum included one course each on tropical ecology, sociology, and conservation, taught by Catherine Potvin and Gilles Seutin, Uli Locher, and Bob Bonnell, respectively. Some of the material covered during the semester was presented in lecture format, however most of the learning took place in the field. Each student worked two days per week with a local NGO or government department, and each of the three courses included numerous field trips.

The last field trip took us to Kuna Yala, home of one of Panama's four indigenous peoples, the Kuna. Inaccessible by road, Kuna Yala is controlled by the self-governed Kuna, and is recognized by the Panamanian government as a reserve, or comarca, as well as one of the country's ten provinces. The comarca comprises a large mainland area containing eight Kuna communities along the Caribbean coast of northeastern

Panama, and two interior communities, as well as over one hundred small islands, four of which are occupied by Kunas.

During our recent field trip, we were hosted for three days by the island community of Ikupseni. Our activities were organized by members of Dobbo Yala, a dynamic NGO working to promote environmental conservation and sustainable development for indigenous peoples of Panama. For part of our stay in Ikupseni, we participated in a series of workshops on environmental and social issues related to indigenous people in Panama.

The island of Ikupseni is about two or three hectares in area, most of which is covered by closely-spaced huts, which have thatched roofs and walls made out of bamboo. A typical hut has a floor area of two to three hundred square feet, and contains

length of the island.

Kuna Philosophy

At the port-end of the island, where small Colombian mer-

use in school.

Upon arriving in Ikupseni we were welcomed formally by Heraclio Lopez on behalf of Dobbo Yala, and a respected professor on behalf of the com-

necessary for health and sustenance and we can take everything we need from her, while caring for and respecting her. One can never claim ownership over the earth, and conse-

quently it is never appropriate to speak of land proprietorship.

The following two days were filled with lectures from speakers of three different indigenous groups in Panama: the

Madre-Tierra has everything that is necessary for health and sustenance and we can take everything we need from her, while caring for and respecting her

two or three rooms separated by thin walls which extend beyond head-height but not as high as the roof. Most families live in one or two huts, occasionally surrounded by a small, enclosed yard. There is a network of narrow dirt paths which divide blocks of properties. Two wider paths run parallel along the

chant boats dock, there is a basketball court surrounded by a number of two-story, cement community buildings. A focal point for activity, this area of the island is often full of children playing. One can't help but be struck by the dominant presence of children on Ikupseni. Throughout the three days on

the island, we were constantly greeted and followed by young kids. Their favorite address was, "Ola!", which many of them would repeat over and over with gusto. The youngest ones could only speak a few words of Spanish, but those who were about eight years old and older could communicate well in both their native tongue and the Spanish that they

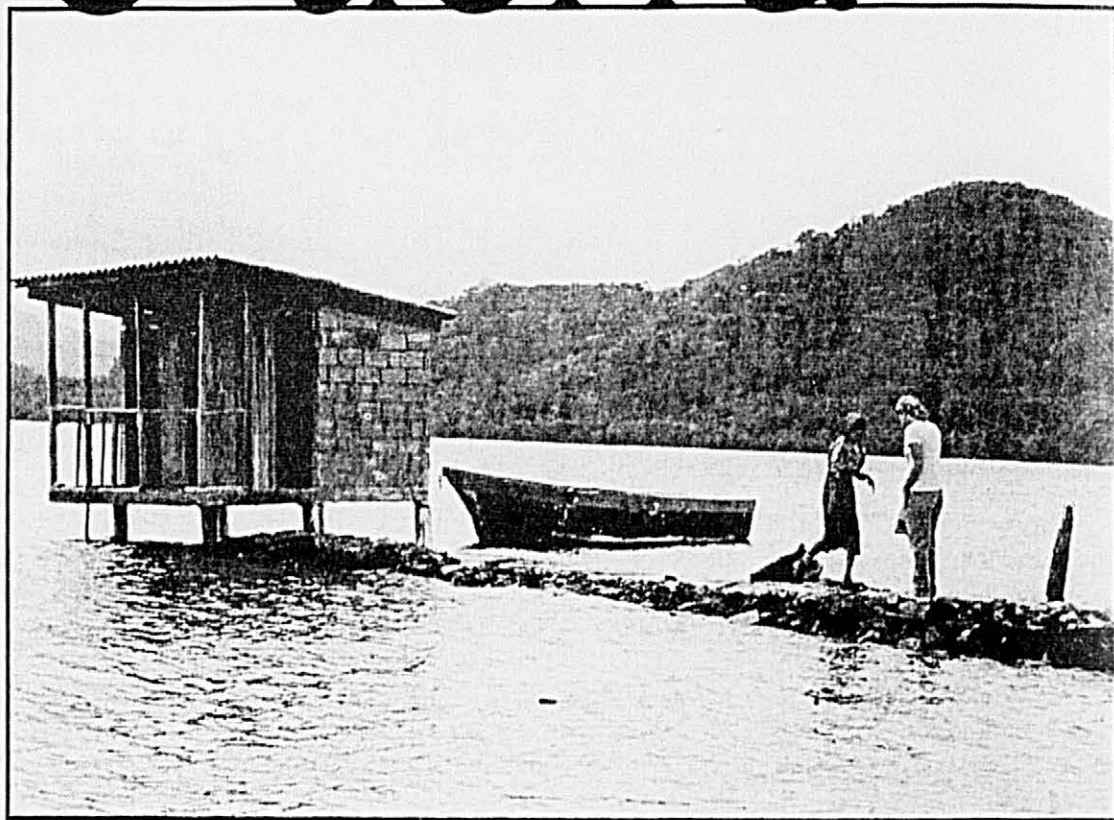
community. We were then introduced in small groups to the people whose homes we would be staying in for the three days. Each group of students then went off with their hosts to get acquainted, hang their hammocks and get settled.

That day we were presented to the Sahila, who is traditionally the political and religious leader of a Kuna community. He spoke in Kuna and his words were translated into Spanish by the professor for our benefit. This was where we received our first introduction to Kuna philosophy. As he welcomed us formally to the village, he told us that we were all children of the one Great God, and therefore all brothers and sisters. Like the people of the village, we too were his children. He also spoke of the relationship between humans and the earth, who is called Madre-Tierra (Mother-Earth), and was created by the Great God. Madre-Tierra has everything that is

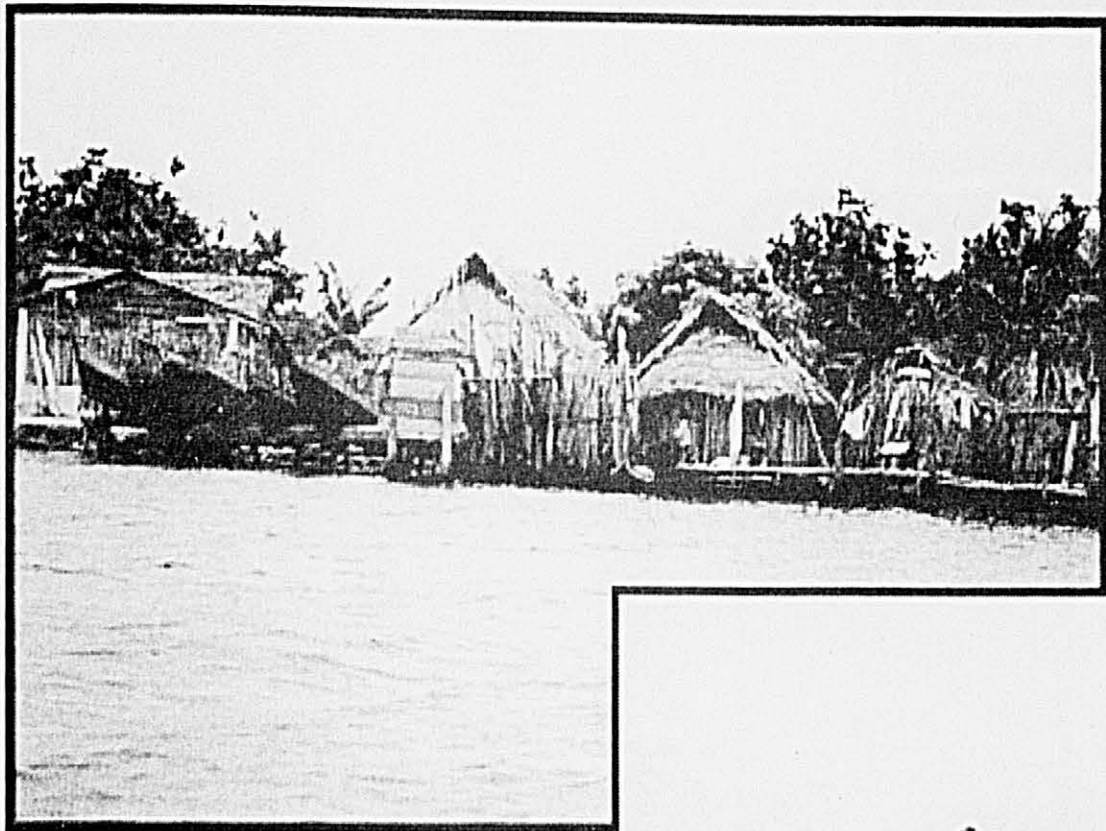
Kuna, the Ember and the Ngobe-Bugle. Topics ranged from an overview of the Kuna way of life as it relates to Madre-Tierra to the recent struggles of indigenous peoples with foreign mining companies. The main objective of the conference was for the members of Dobbo Yala to share their experiences and their perspectives on conservation and indigenous issues with a group of students from another culture. This opportunity exposed us first hand to many issues we may only read about, and made for a very enlightening exchange.

Kuna Environmentalism

One of the lectures, "Madre-Tierra: Una moda de vida" (Mother Earth: A Way of Life) was given by Heraclio Lopez and discussed Kuna idealism in depth. Recapitulating many of the ideas the Sahila had spoken about, he also elaborated on the idea of the provisional aspect of the earth,



McGill's School of the Environment experiences Kuna Yala, Panama



and the mutual care that is necessary between humans and the earth. Kuna means 'child of the earth,' and their mission is to protect and conserve her, to be in harmony with nature. In many ways what was said during this presentation struck a familiar chord. In response to a feeling of disconnection from our natural environment, as well as the accumulating proof of the drastic consequences incurred by the destruction of natural resources, many western environmentalists and ecologists are of the same mind. In this sense, it was both surprising and comforting to find that the cultural barrier is not so great when

faced with the pressing need to protect the earth by conserving resources and living sustainably.

After this idealistic perspective was offered, our exposure to the Kuna lifestyle offered some interesting insight into their day-to-day relationship with the earth. The Kuna of Playon Chico live in very contained spaces, a system which has important ecological advantages. For instance, the island of



Ikupseni is a deforested island and is home all of the community members. This concentration of habitation is superior to a more sparse settlement. In

limiting the area of human disturbance, the destruction of natural resources is enclosed and therefore lowers incidences of habitat fragmentation, which has had adverse effects on wildlife the world over.

"Kalu" spaces are also delineated in that it is not permitted to hunt or otherwise exploit the environment. These locations are identified by sages in the community and are respected by the community as sacred areas. Unlike national

non-biodegradable garbage littering the island. Waste generated on the island has always been thrown into the sea, which never was a problem in earlier decades when everything used by the community was a product of nature. However, the industrial products that are now ending up on the sea floor around the island are significantly affecting the marine ecology of the area. Similarly, as there is no sewage system to speak of, outhouses built over the water surrounding the is-

land serve as toilet. It goes without saying that nobody swims in the water close to the outhouses, and it seems as though there are no serious problems with this system up until now. However, there is undoubtedly a limit to the amount of human waste that can enter the water beyond which significant ecological imbalances will occur.

Challenges such as waste management which are related to population size are particularly pertinent to Ikupseni owing to the demography of the community. Children make up the dominant age group of

Ikupseni's population, making the average age on the island about sixteen. In addition, it is common for teenage girls as young as thirteen to have babies, so the rapidly growing population of the island will likely go through a period of increasing expansion before the growth slows. Consequently, population pressure on the environment will increase tremendously in the near future in addition to the intensified social challenges that will face the Ikupseni community as its population grows.

The fact is that the rise of population parallels the rise in the exploitation of natural resources and the environment. By the same token, there is no group of people who have the one great answer to the earth's environmental problems or can reveal the secrets of sustainable living. There are ways we can learn many valuable lessons from the Kuna, and we were encouraged by the revelation that the cultural barriers we need to cross are not so great.

parks elsewhere in Panama—where illegal logging often goes on—and even in Canada where protection laws can be bent if a sufficiently large corporation wishes to expand onto a protected area, the kalu spaces are fiercely guarded by the Kuna. The prohibition of exploitation is not taken lightly. The Kuna, in this way, possess a certain enlightened self-interest. Knowing that Madre-Tierra must be cared for the sake of their own well-being makes it a ridiculous endeavour to try to bend these rules. This link is often very difficult for members of our society to make, as our day-to-day life often sees us separated from our natural environment.

The Kuna village is not without its environmental problems. The Kuna people are concerned with the preservation of their cultural traditions. Nonetheless, in recent years they have become more involved in the market economy. The most visible result of this is the presence of





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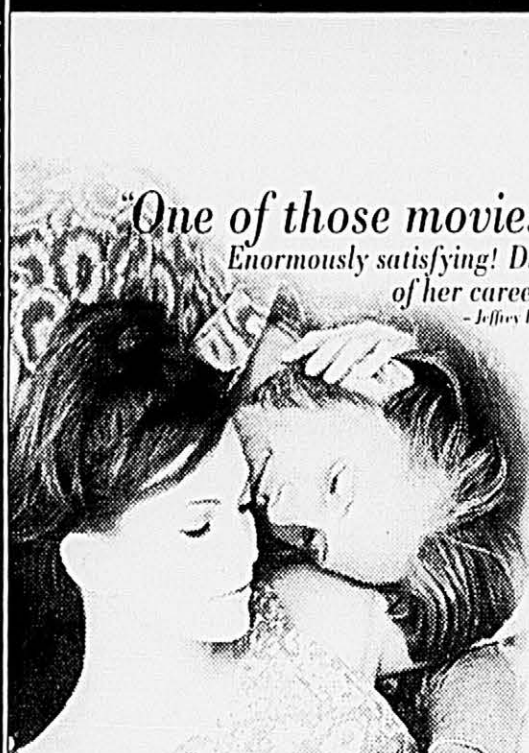
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"The poem which I am now about
to read to you was written by
Eeyore, or myself, in a quiet mo-
ment. I call it "Poem".
Christopher Robin is going.
At least I think he is.
Where? Nobody knows.
But he is going - I mean he goes
(to rhyme with 'knows').
Do we care? (to rhyme with
'where')
We do. Very much. (I haven't got a
rhyme for that second 'is' yet).
Bother. (Well now I haven't got a
rhyme for 'bother')
Bother. (Those two 'bothers' will
have to rhyme with each other)
Bother.
The fact is, this is more difficult
than I thought.
I ought (very good indeed)
I ought to begin again.
But it is easier to stop.
Christopher Robin, goodbye.
I, I and all your friends, sends (I
mean)
All your friend, send (very awk-
ward this, it keeps going wrong)
Well anyhow, we send our love.
End.

If anyone wants to clap, now is
the time to do it." They all clap.
"Thank you," said Eeyore, "unex-
pected and gratifying, if a little
lacking in smack."
-A.A. Milne

Don't Be Afraid to Dance with THE MOLESTICS

by Karl Gowenlock
and Mose Buchele

Q: What do you get when you mix Swing, Punk, Lounge, Calypso, Polka, Spoken Word and any number of other influences into a single evening of hard drinking and hard dancing?

A: Hokum.

It was a term originally coined by urban Bee-Bop sophisticates to mock uneducated rural jazz musicians. Vancouver's Molestics now use it to describe themselves. According to the liner notes of their latest CD, Hokum reemerged in Canada, "coinciding with the death of the welfare state as a legion of unemployed, well-rested overweight Canadians crudely began putting dirty rhymes to corny ditties."

You probably missed the Molestics last week when they blew through town. You didn't know any better. But now you do, and they no doubt will be returning some day. These citizens have since released two Albums: *Tropic of Hokum* and their latest, *Manufacturing Hokum*.

The band plays with a kind of punk rock, populist, proletarian mentality. They churn out great tune after great tune without pretension. Fun for fun's sake. "Any bar full of hammered Canadians can dance to our stuff," say guitarist Sammy Petite. This was proven happily last weekend at Le Swimming.

Most of their music is based on 20's style Jazz tunes (a major influence being Jelly Roll Morton), and they give new life to many a jazz standard with their hilariously absurd lyrics. Their shows are theatrical, full of gags and drunken monologues, but they are much more than a gimmick band. Their music is well arranged, original, and played with skill and feeling. There is an emotional authenticity that transcends (or incorporates?) hokeyness. Just as often as their songs are about bestiality or the Scarlet Pimpernel, lead singer Mike Soret is crooning about disappointed love or growing up poor in Winnipeg. But the Molestics are always, always fun.

Though often billed as a swing band, The Molestics do not quite fit the recent swing revival fad/scene. "The crowds are really

boring at these swing nights," says Petite. "Nobody claps, they all dance in formation. If you play too fast they can't dance; if you play anything that isn't swing they all sit down. It's an albatross around our neck... an albatross that pays the bills."

"When the (swing) thing started out I thought it was going to be like Cabaret," says

gramming a CD player to play Louis Prima, Frank Sinatra and Glen Miller."

Fortunately The Molestics travel a territory far wider than that of the swing or lounge scene. They are just as likely to be playing some punk show in Seattle or at a bar in Red Deer, Alberta. Their quest to promote awareness of Hokum brings



Soret. "I thought it was going to be everything. Sort of like the start of punk. Like when punk hit Winnipeg in about '82 there was all these weird bands that came out cause they thought punk means anything. So all these weird bands came out and it was like Dada - just this crazy shit would happen. Then it's like 'Oh no punk's not like that. Here's your chords, here's your costumes, here's your punk kit.' With the Swing thing it happened a lot faster... Like this guy back in Vancouver he's got these swing franchises. He had this one night that worked good so he started franchising the thing out. He'd get a couple of dance instructors, he'd give somebody a stack of CDs and he'd send them out to some square place and haul a bunch of kids in to Lindy Hop. That's not the way to make a scene - might be the way to make a quick buck. None of the good things that could have come out of it did." [SIC]

"For a scene based on music you have to attract musicians and people that are into music," adds Petite. "You can't do that by pro-

gramming a CD player to play Louis Prima, Frank Sinatra and Glen Miller."

them to some of Canada's most remote back waters, but one always gets the sense that they love what they do. "Those Missionary gigs can be fun" says Soret. "They never see our kind of stuff - it's all like Tragically Hip cover bands and stuff like that - and they're glad to get it. And they always dance to everything. When we do a gig like that we try to connect with the audience - you know, show the crowd that we're into some of the same things they are. Like when we play a place like Whitehorse we do a Black Sabbath cover early on in the show - it works really well with horns."

Versatile, original, talented, and hilarious, the Molestics will continue to entertain (and occasionally offend) audiences around the country.

They are headed back home to Vancouver and have a short tour planned for California, but will be back out East in the late summer or early fall. In the meantime their CDs are available (although they may require ordering) and come recommended as must for your summertime musical intake.

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The Gazette

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I was less than a year ago, it was another life, a dream, perhaps, or maybe just another universe. My memory is rather dreadful. I don't trust it one bit and I advise you to do the same. Facts often escape me as do names. My mind does not remember so well as my heart.

I could refer to an atlas, but that will be of no help, for the places I have been are gone and dead. They evaporated the moment I left them, and if I should tell you the name of a place, and if you should happen one day to go there and find things are not as I have said they are, you might call me a liar. No, I won't tell you of the place but rather how I felt it.

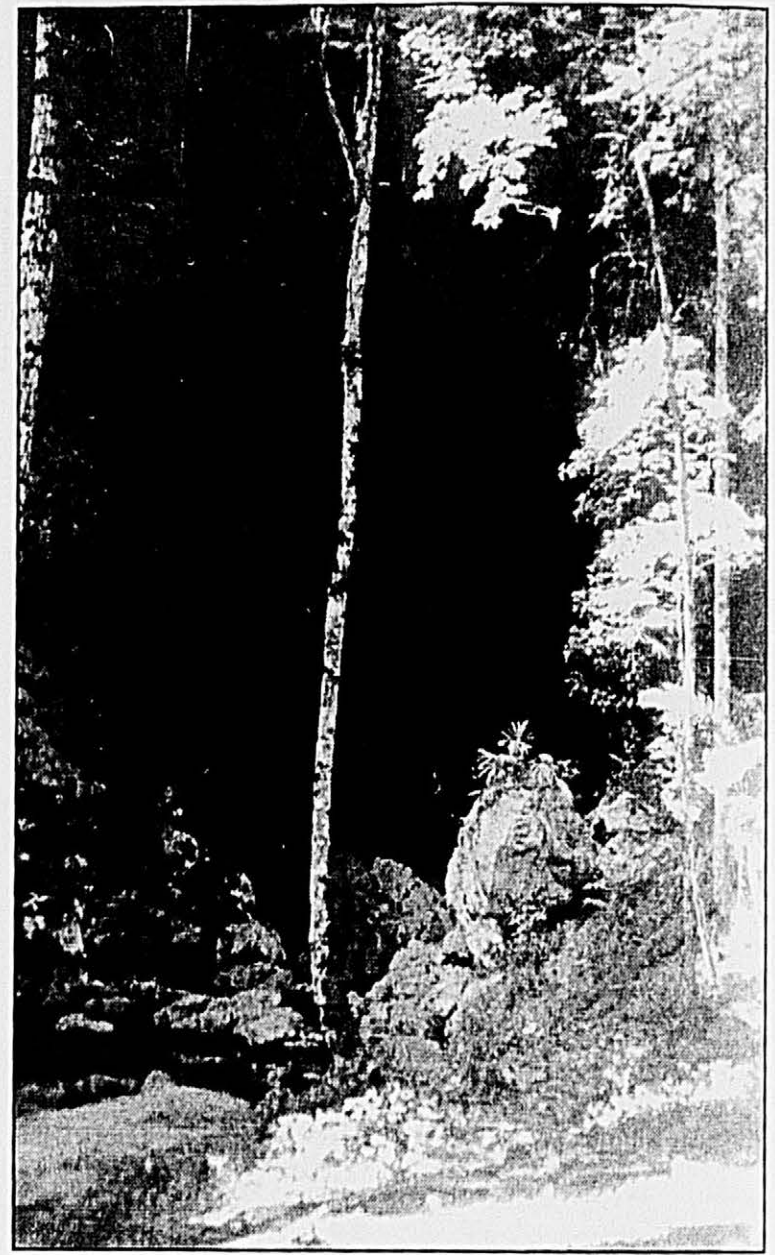
Good God, it was hot, so hot sometimes I couldn't breathe, I

couldn't move. The city was a nightmare, especially after nightfall, a time I had been warned not to be out. And Christ the blackness. Where were the city lights to light the street signs to tell me where in hell I was and how in hell to get home? I could not reconcile the darkness and the heat they seemed so opposite to me. I looked for the light source of the heat and all I saw was nothing and I think for once I could truly sympathize with a lobster underneath the lid in a cauldron of boiling water... still alive, still conscious, still something.

Oh, I was glad to leave the city that seemed so uncivilized but for what? I found myself in the jungle in the tropics I had never known. The tropics I will never know. Its secrets are not

mine to know. The fruit was Edenic and tempting and sinful. Fruit that was too large, too ripe for life, in the jungle of the animals whose names I do not remember but that's OK because myths do not need to bear names and anyhow what name would you give to a shadow of a woman stepping out of a jaguar. I slept outside, in a hammock, sweating out the sins of the city. No, I don't remember sleeping, it was loud, too loud, symphonies of cicadas singing in a night that would never be silent. I couldn't decide if it was paradise or hell, maybe it was neither, but anyhow I didn't belong in either. But that was another lifetime. It didn't snow there.

Anya Antonovych



Creative Space

She walked slowly into the house of darkness, easily climbing up the chipped, outdoor staircase. Looking at the different doorbells before her, she wondered whether it was possible to press the wrong one. Maybe she should not ring any at all and quietly turn around, walk away, and leave the dark shabby building behind. It felt very cold inside the first door that led to the foyer. Her arms clung to each other and she correctly predicted that the temperature could only drop once she descended the stairs into the submerged apartment. At any other home she would expect a hand to hold hers and lead her through, to mark the trail that could only unfold before two sets of bewildered eyes searching for it together. Here she stood alone and looked for the path by herself, without any help, without any signs showing her that she walked and turned in all the right direction. Dim lighting lent a hazy glow to most of the hallway. A brighter lamp made the kitchen the warmest of the rooms, but she knew to expect a small, white candle to be the only source of illumination in the bedroom she sought. There, past the kitchen and long corridor the coldness overwhelmed her, but the warm brilliance of the burning candle kept her from leaving, from giv-

ing up and going back empty-handed - without an answer, without the hand she resigned to hold and lead herself. Resolving to take charge and assume the confidence her role demanded enabled her to see the room more clearly, the outlines of furniture and people appearing. With a persistent gaze she kept track of her location but the path remained dark and obscured. Could she do this on her own - successfully reach the undefined destination that once seemed so unthreatening but now only served to intimidate and lure her into the abyss of insecurity? Perhaps conviction had nothing to do with it; maybe self doubt helped her come up with all the right questions that she knew she could not answer - not alone. While she stood at the doorway, mapping the contours of the candlelit room she realized that even if she had the answers, they would not satisfy her desire for happiness and resolution. So she slowly backed away, reclaiming her passion and empathy, her willingness to accept and understand. By retracing her steps she found her way back - through the long hallway, the kitchen, the old steps leading up to the foyer, and meanwhile, it got warmer, and she could feel herself relaxing, the muscles in her face allowing her again to express the hundreds of

emotions that were frozen on this descent. She took the few long strides from the main door to the outside and in the sunny bright light that caused her to wince, she realized that she could only find a satisfying place in the blinding glare of pure light, that relieved the frigid cold from where she had just emerged.

Anna Schultz

the daily would like to thank all those who contributed to creative space this year.

Love
Unconscious
Conscious
sight beauty wonder
mind body
happiness joy ecstasy
touch warmth
intimacy

D.S. Rovins

Montage a Jumble

LITERARY AIRS HINDER MAGAZINE

by Alex Halperin

Before metaphor, simile, allusion, alliteration, stream of consciousness, modernism, irony, postmodernism and post-irony corrupted us, there was narrative. Thousands of years ago people sat around fires entertaining themselves with stories, and people today still do the same thing. These stories evolved into texts: epics, drama, novels and lyric poems among other genres, and each of these at their best performs the fundamental task of literature: to entertain. Whether someone is reading John Grisham over a coffee counter or watching Othello, they want to be entertained.

I am no scholar about to delve into what entertainment is or why people seek it. But entertainment does have a pragmatic use. If a book does not entertain someone, they will stop reading it. This is not in the author's best interest. Having said that, entertaining the public is not the only reason why people write. They write because they're bored, for catharsis, or simply because they enjoy it, but the act of writing does not necessarily include inflicting one's scrawl on the public and sometimes it is admirable not to do so.

Sadly, entertainment is what's lacking in *Montage*, an annual journal of writing and artwork compiled under the mandate "to promote artistic collaboration." *Montage* fulfills its goal; many people collaborated to assemble an attractive journal and their hard work is to be admired. It has engaging photography, a sleek layout and a substantial amount of written work. Unfortunately, very little of it is worth reading. In defense of the magazine, good writing is a solitary pursuit and perhaps contrary to its collaborative mission. However, I can not devote a thousand words to how pretty it looks since text does make up the book's bulk. The problem with *Montage* is not technical incompetence, but a gross misconception of literature. Of the forty-eight text pieces in *Montage*, forty-four are in the first person (or the second person, which implies a first person). The overwhelming majority of the pieces are confessional, recalling smidgens of pasts or thoughts for the voyeuristic reader. In the act of publishing confessional writing, the author insinuates that

their life is of interest to the average person.

All effective memoirs, whether they have literary pretensions such as *Tropic of Cancer* or are just published to sell and fizzle out like *The Kiss* and *Angela's Ashes*, rely on sensationalism to captivate the reader. The typical reader is rabidly voyeuristic, dying to add vicarious excitement to his vapid life, but the memoirs in *Montage* are tepid and boring. The excerpt from Marni Levitt's "A Story About Hope" is a perfect example. Without a driving narrative, it is a simple recounting of a visit to her girlfriend's house in Brooklyn. Clean, but not exceptionally well written, the writer assumes that the public craves a recollection of a fairly humdrum episode.

Such a belief stems from the happy smiley nineties notion that everyone has a story worth telling. Even in our indulgent decade, this is not the case. An untitled poem by Adrienne Lachapelle begins with the wonderful image, "The curve of my lover's belly tapers/like the earth into a stream," but under literary pretensions and desperate stabs at profundity, it ends with the substanceless but neat sounding lines "Against the wind/without traveling/without breathing/a fresh breath." These sound nice but don't really mean anything in the context of the poem. College writers should stop trying to sound deep and start fulfilling the mandate of published literature which is to entertain their audience. Depth can come later, we're young.

There are so many hackneyed literary devices used to no end in *Montage* that I do not have space to list them all. A few of the most unctuous are second person narration, putting I in the lower case, and smattering the text across the page without reason or (God Forbid!) rhyme. Each of these had a brief moment of glory and is now an obsolete cliché discrediting the author without adding to the poem.

Strikingly absent in *Montage* is fiction. This is because writing fiction is very difficult. To develop believable characters and advance them towards a conclusion is harder and less gratifying than ranting or piling together mean-

ingless prose tidbits like this musing from Ted Won's "Artificial Respiration:" "We are surrounded by photographs, mounted against plaster, sanitarium-like white walls. I collect them, use them for graffiti against my walls. I've recently developed a penchant for fashion ads shot in hygienic, minimalist whitespaces, or the variants thereof, ambient lighting, blue worlds. Don't like the voyeur cam motif though. A little repulsive, too pixelated and too grainy. One does not like to be reminded of our faults." It is not so disturbing that there is not a good short story in *Montage*; it is disturbing that we have stopped trying.

All said, there are several fine pieces in *Montage*. Amelia Perkins' poem "On the South Side" is an articulate and witty poem about alienation, James Lafferty's "Bloom" is a moving poem about love and sickness, and Wendy Smolash's "What the Typographer Thinks While Making Love", has a stunning image of a woman as machine. But as a whole the magazine stumbles over its ardent desire to be literary while lacking the most basic elements of literature.

Montage is hosting an event, Malhexis this Friday at 4152 St. Laurent, 11pm.

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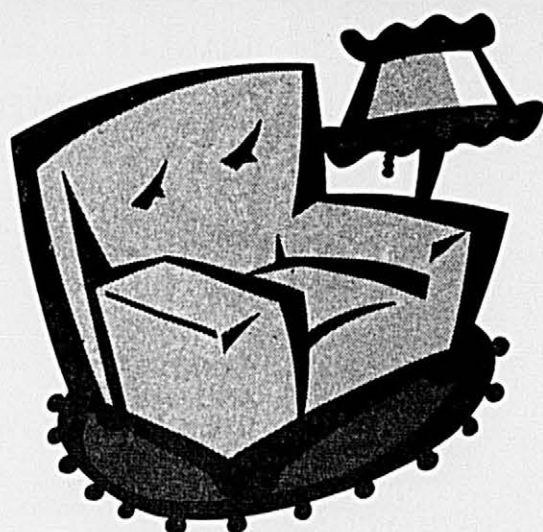
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EVENTS

Thursday April 8

Melee. A benefit concert at Club Studio. Featuring Gangster Politics, Future Shock, San Citrus, Equalizer, The Planet Earth orchestra, D.J Sean, The Final Four. 10\$ at the door. All proceeds go to Dans La Rue. Club Studio.

ROOTS RADIO. CKUT 10th Annual Funding Drive starts today until April 18th. For info call Pohanna Pyne at 398-6787 ext.0283.

Poetry Reading. 8 pm. \$5. Ian Ferrier, Heather O'Neil, Fortner Anderson, Buffy Bonanza, Corcy Frost, Ilona Martonfi Di Sclafani. 3625 Aylmer St. Call 398-6243.

Friday April 9

Poetry @ Lunch. Next Reading: Mary Di Michele. Lande Reading Room, Rare Books & Special Collections Division, 4th-Floor, McLennan Library. 12:15 pm. All are Welcome. Admission is free. For info call 398-1565 or 398-4711

Saturday April 10

Animal Rescue registered volunteer organization is having some tables at a RUMMAGE SALE from 9:30- 6 pm at St. Malachy's Church, 5330 Clanranald Ave. ARN needs more volunteers, donations, supplies for our no-kill shelter, and loving homes for all our neutered, vaccinated, and healthy cats and dogs. For info call 482-7638. <http://welcome.to/am>

Sunday April 11

Big Brothers and Big sisters of West Island: Bowl for Kids Sake Bowlathon. Laurentian Lanes, 222 Monté de Liesse, St.Laurent. Call 684-6100 Ext. 32 or 33 for more info.

Monday April 12

AMI (Alliance for the Mentally Ill) Québec is holding support

groups for the following: Family members of people with mental illnesses, people with obsessive compulsive disorder and their families, spouses of the mentally ill, siblings and adult children of the mentally ill. 7:30 pm, 4333 Côte Ste. Catherine. For info call 486-1448.

Tuesday April 13

Learn to fix a bike! Spring workshop series. Right to Move/La voie libre is a working group of QPIRG Concordia dedicated to promoting bicycling as an accessible and environmentally sustainable method of transportation. Today: introduction to bikes. Workshops continue until Tuesday, May 18th. All workshops begin at 7 pm and are located behind the Concordia University Hall building. Call 848-7585 for more info.

"Video Tasting and Wine Viewing" in English lounge (Arts Building) 4- 6 pm. We will be showing short original movies written, directed and produced by McGill students. Wine and snacks will be served. Contact Nivi at 845-2628 or Angie at 847-0877 for more info.

Ongoing/Volunteer

CLSC René-Cassin announces its 1999 Volunteer Internship Program. If you have leadership potential and would like to join our team of volunteer interns, this intensive 6 month training program is for you. We are offering two theory sessions a week on topics related to working with people of all ages. April 26, 1999-September 27, 1999. Theory sessions Mondays & Thursdays 10:00 am-12:00 pm. Call 488-9163 Ext.351.

The Centre for Literacy is hosting a second series of workshops on learning disabilities. This series will focus on adolescents and adults with learning disabilities. Workshops start April 12 and run until April 19. Call 931-8731 ext.

1415 for more info.

April 19- May 7, 1999. The Professional Theatre Department of Dawson College presents *When We Are Married*, a farcical comedy by J.B Priestley. Admission, \$7.50, Students, \$6.00. For reservations please call 931-5000.

April 15-25, Concordia Theatre Department presents *Romeo and Juliet*, Directed by Alexander Marine. D.B Clarke Theatre, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. Call 848-4742 for more info.

Action self-defence course for women, offered by the Montreal Asasult Prevention Centre. Appropriate for all ages and physical abilities. Taught by a woman. No simulated attacks with a padded aggressor. Saturdays, April 24 and May 1, 1999 from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm, \$75 per person. Call 284-1212.

The School of Fine Arts of the Saidye Bronfman Centre for the Arts is presently accepting registrations for the Spring 1999 session. over 160 courses are offered in drawing, painting, ceramics, sculpture, printmaking, photography, jewellery, design and calligraphy. The Spring session begins April 19 and continues to June 18. Call 739-2301 for info.

Shalom Line is offering a Spring Training Program for potential volunteers and is scheduled for April. For more information about Shalom Line, contact Suzanne Herscovitch, Coordinator, Community Information Services, at 345-2645, ext. 3380.

À deux mains is a youth organization seeking translators (English to French). For more info call Sophie at 481-0277

Santropol Roulant is accepting applications for their Skills Exchange Program until April 15. for more info or an application, call Melissa at 282-0245

daily classifieds

Ads may be placed through the Daily Business Office, Room B-07, University Centre, 900-1400. Deadline is 14h00, two working days prior to publication. McGill Students & Staff (with valid ID): \$4.75 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$4.25 per day. General Public: \$6.00 per day, or \$5.00 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. Extra charges may apply, prices include applicable GST or PST. Full payment should accompany your advertising order and may be made in cash or by personal cheque (for amounts over \$20 only). For more information, please visit our office or call 898-6790. WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD CAREFULLY WHEN IT APPEARS IN THE PAPER. The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damages due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print any classified ad.

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